DISNEY COLLECTION
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A Newsletter for the Horticulture Division of Walt Disney World

Every Bloomin' Thing

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Vol. 2, No. 11 November 1980

FROM TONY'S DESK

As we take a look around our facilities there are signs of progress! Our new greenhouse is finally taking shape, the old aluminum house is being rehabbed and climatized, and soil bins are being built at Grounds Maintenance. A climate of busy activity is everywhere!

The Tree Farm remains in high gear as we continue to bulge at the seams with plant material. Some relief, however, will come shortly when Doyle and his forces gradually start moving to the EPCOT site after the first of the year. Meanwhile, landscape estimates are being ground out for all of Showcase and scheduling dates for planting are being finalized.

Evident signs of preparedness permeates the air and as we all know by now, being prepared can solve problems and eliminate confusion for tomorrow. Let's keep forging ahead!

And incidentally .... I want to wish you all a very happy "Bird-day"!

Tony

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Three horticulture courses will be offered at WDW next semester -- Introduction to Horticultural Science, Landscape Plant Materials, and Horticulture Industry Survey (a field trip series).

Registration for these Valencia Community College classes to be taught here on property will be on Thursday, December 18, from 2:30 to 4:00 at the Tree Farm/Nursery.

TREE OF THE MONTH

Cassia bicapsularis

Presently in bloom at Space Mountain, this evergreen shrub displays terminal spikelike clusters of small yellow flowers. The leaves are compound with 3-5 pairs of ½" round leaflets, and 6" long seed pods that can now be seen. Cassia bicapsularis is easily grown from seed.

A native to tropical South America, it can be grown in full sun and is used most often for bright yellow winter color between October and February.

Cassia is hard to transplant, so is best planted from containers. Balled and burlapped cassias rarely survive.

PLANTS ON STAGE FOR NOVEMBER

Aster caroliniana ("Blue Aster") - A stout-stemmed native with a mass of blue violet flowers can be seen along the roadside of Bear Island Road.

Viola cvs. ("Pansy") - 'Imperial Blue', 'Imperial Orange', 'Golden Champion', and 'Crystal Clear White' are Pansy cultivars that will be seen in hanging baskets and as bedding plants throughout the winter in the Magic Kingdom and resort areas.

Coleus cvs. - A new colorful Coleus with a cream background and green/red edging can be seen in beds under the Ligustrums in Adventureland.

Poinsettia: It's Not Poisonous!

Beware of the common belief that poinsettias are poisonous! Tests conducted at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh proved that the common Christmas poinsettia is a "nontoxic plant". Conclusive tests were conducted with laboratory test animals and no signs of toxicity were noted.

So, let's pass the word and put this myth to rest. (But who would want to eat a poinsettia anyway!)

Fusiform Rust of Pine

A serious problem at WALT DISNEY WORLD, fusiform rust is the single most damaging disease of pines in Florida. Slash Pine, *Pinus Elliottii*, is highly susceptible to this rust disease, which is caused by the fungus *Cronartium fusiforme*.

Fusiform rust lives from year to year on pines, causing spindle-shaped galls. In the spring, these galls are covered with bright orange spores which, when disseminated by wind or water, infect the young leaves of evergreen oaks. Laurel oak, *Quercus laurifolia*, is a very susceptible alternate host for this disease.

No serious damage is done to the alternate host. The oaks do, however, provide a "breeding ground" for the fungus spores, which later serve to infect the young needles and growing shoots of pine trees.

Control of rust diseases such as fusiform rust is often difficult, as rust spores can be disseminated over great distances by wind. Fungicide sprays can protect nursery grown plants, but often are not practical for large scale landscape applications. In these situations, cultural controls are most feasible. Cultural controls used include pruning off infected branches, planting resistant species, planting disease free nursery stock, and avoiding cultivation or fertilization which will result in an early flush of susceptible growth.

On Our Bookshelf ...

Want to learn more about plant diseases and pests? *Diseases and Pests of Ornamental Plants* by Pascal P. Pirone is an excellent source of information on this subject.

NEWS FROM THE AREAS ...

Fort Wilderness -- Frost control during the winter months is a challenge in all of our areas, and Discovery Island is no exception. Portable heaters have been pulled out of storage and will be ready to go when the danger of frost threatens.

Horticulture Training -- Two sessions remain in this year's "Horticulture at the Walt Disney World Vacation Kingdom" class series. On December 2, we will cover Interior Landscaping and Greenhouse Management. The following class, on December 16, will deal with Landscape Design.

Lake Buena Vista Landscape -- Landscape improvements around the Vacation Villas include removing and replacing sod in the wooded areas. Fall plantings of annuals will be completed for the upcoming holidays.

Landscape Architects -- Landscape and irrigation plans are in the works for the new Solid Waste Energy Conversion Plant. Design work is also progressing on waterfalls and new bird exhibits for Discovery Island.

Landscape Construction -- Our new Landscape Construction team is beginning to take shape. Welcome to our new secretary, Natalie Connors, and to Scott Shultz, our new Assistant Superintendent.

Tree Farm/Nursery -- A great crop of poinsettia standards will be sure to light up our landscape this Christmas season. 250 hot pink (Annette Hegg) and red (Gutiber V-14 and V-10) poinsettias have reached a height of 4 ft.

WDW Landscape -- Most of our annual display beds have been replanted with cool weather crops such as pansies and calendulas. Look for the beginning of our Christmas show around the second week of December.

WDW Pest Control -- A Pest Control Operator Trainee program will be starting on January 4. Two trainees will be accepted into this one year long program, which will include practical training in all phases of Pest Control.

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Sports Update -- The Landscape Maintenance softball team has beat Cast Activities, 8 to 6, to win the Early League Championship. Their regular season record was 14 to 2, and their play-off record was 4 to 1. Congratulations!

Editor: Tom Underwood

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